

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing remarks, claims 1-20 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 11 being the independent claims. Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 3, 6-10, 13, and 16-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, claims 1-2, 4-5, 11-12, and 14-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Adams, et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,163,862 (Adams). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Adams relates to methods and apparatus for evaluating on-chip signals using an on-chip test circuit with an externally applied test signal. (Adams, col. 1, lines 8-10). In Adams, an on-chip signal to be evaluated (26) and an externally generated reference signal (32a) are applied to inputs of a test circuit 30. (Adams, col. 2, lines 21-24). The on-chip signal is compared with the reference signal to produce an output, corresponding to a characteristic of the on-chip signal. (Adams, col. 2, lines 25-27).

Nowhere does Adams teach or suggest that the output of the test circuit is used to correct for parameters in the operational portion of the chip. In addition, neither the on-chip signal nor the test signal received by the test circuit of Adams represent a process

dependent integrated circuit parameter. Circuit parameters "are considered 'process-dependent' because they depend on the particular technology used to process the IC chip." (Specification, para. [0035]). Examples of signals indicative of process-dependent circuit parameters, among others, include signal indicative of a high sheet-rho of an IC chip, signal indicative of a low sheet-rho of an IC chip, signal indicative of a gate-to-source threshold voltage of a PMOS transistor constructed on an IC chip, signal indicative of a gate-to-source threshold voltage of an NMOS transistor constructed on an IC chip, signal indicative of a transconductance parameter (K) of a PMOS transistor constructed on an IC chip, and a signal indicative of a transconductance parameter (K) of a PMOS transistor constructed on an IC chip. (Specification, para. [0038]-[0039]).

Adams does not teach or suggest each and every element of independent claims 1 and 11. Specifically, Adams does not teach or suggest a method including "(a) receiving at least one digitized sense signal from the integrated circuit chip, whereby the at least one digitized sense signal represents a corresponding process-dependent parameter within the integrated circuit chip; and (b) determining an analog value for the at least one process-dependent circuit parameters from the corresponding at least one digitized signal; wherein the process-dependent parameter is measure within a processor monitor portion of the integrated circuit and the at least one determined analog value is utilized to correct for the process-dependent parameter in an operational portion of the integrated circuit," as recited in claim 1.

In addition, Adams does not teach or suggest a system including "means for receiving at least one digitized sense signal from the integrated circuit chip, whereby the at least one digitized sense signal represents a corresponding process-dependent

parameter within the integrated circuit chip; and means for determining an analog value for the at least one process-dependent circuit parameters from the corresponding at least one digitized signal; wherein the process-dependent parameter is measured within a process monitor portion of the integrated circuit and the at least one determined analog value is utilized to correct for the process-dependent parameter in an operational portion of the integrated circuit," as recited in independent claim 11.

For at least these reasons, independent claims 1 and 11 are patentable over Adams. Claims 2, 4, and 5 depend from claim 1 and claims 12, 14, and 15 depend from claim 11. For at least the above reasons, and further in view of their own features, dependent claims 2, 4, 5, 12, 14, and 15 are patentable over Adams. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori A. Gordon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lori" being more prominent.

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